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nearest answer to the question replied that his *crest* was the Raven. The Kitkatla was a Raven man, too, and to the narrator's surprise, treated him as a brother for the rest of his stay in Victoria. He shook with laughter as he recalled the experience, and added that though he was quite willing to accept favours of this kind he would never dream of returning them. It can be stated unhesitatingly that the Bella Coola have no totemic beliefs concerning their crests. There is not the slightest trace of respect towards the animal, nor yet of exogamy.

Although crests are not objects of religious veneration, yet they have some importance in the realm of social life. The portrayal of one serves to indicate ownership of an ancestral myth describing that particular bird or animal. A wealthy chief is proud to display his crest on a totem-pole, or as a painting on the front wall of his house. Anyone seeing such a design is impressed with the glories of the family history of the owner, to the latter's gratification. A living specimen of the bird or animal is treated with no respect, but its delineation is a memento of family history. For that reason a man is often tattooed[1] with his crest, that derived from his father's first ancestor on the right breast, that from his mother, on the left; and the owner of a canoe often carves his crest on its bow. After the death of a chief a memorial-post is erected near his grave, decorated with a painting or carving of one or more crests to remind observers not only of the deceased, but of his family history, his most treasured possession. It is said, half

[1] It is said that tattooing was formerly customary not only among all the coastal tribes but also the Carriers. Both Bella Coola men and women decorated themselves in this way, but the custom was not universal, and is said never to have been common. It is believed that Haida chiefs tattooed themselves in connection with potlatches; in Bella Coola this was not the case although the operation was performed within the back-room of the patient's house. Two methods were employed. The first was by puncturing the skin with a needle smeared with colouring material; the second and less common, by passing a string coated with the substance beneath the skin. The dye was obtained from river stones which were baked for a long time and then ground into a powder. This keeps indefinitely and can be made ready for use by mixing with water. As far as could be learnt, any skilled craftsman might perform the operation.

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539 776* 761

Raven, blinded by his grief, did not believe him, and responded angrily:

"No, youare not my son. Why do you lie to me? Get out of this house."

[304]

Disgusted at this reception, *O·miatlmai* obeyed. Juft as he was passing through the doorway, Raven noticed the tatoo marks on his legs, and realized that, in spite of the change in his appearance, the visitor was really his son. He called on him to return, but *O·miatlmai* paid no attention to his father's entreaties and sped far away. Raven's grief was beyond expression, but he could do nothing to repair the damage he had done. If it had not been for Raven's mistake, all mortals would return to life four days after death.

771 761 776*

The above myth is widely known among the Bella Coola, and is supposed to be historically accurate. At the same time, few people allow it to influence their thoughts with regard to death or its causes. It is a fact, but one that belongs to the realm of ancient history rather than to everyday experience. When a Bella Coola dies, his relatives, though they know that his death is due to the folly of Raven, tacitly overlook this, and do not feel bitterly towards Raven. Bella Coola beliefs and theology are not systematized, hence it is quite possible for a person to realize a certain fact, such as the cause of death, and yet disregard it entirely. Considering that absolute contradictions can be believed simultaneously, it is not difficult to picture the mental attitude of people who believe, and at the same time disregard their belief.

539 825

One of Raven's spectacular, and at the same time, beneficial exploits was the bringing of sockeye salmon to the Bella Coola River.[1]

[774]

In the beginning of time, no sockeye salmon inhabited the rivers, and Raven determined to supply them. First he tried making wooden fish and throwing them into the water, but though he could animate them, they always died after jumping a few times. The reason for his failure, though he did not know it, was because he had omitted the small bone

[771]

[1]This is an example of conflicting beliefs. In addition to assuming that salmon were sent down by *Alquntam* to furnish food for mankind, and that Raven supplied them in the beginning of time, the Bella Coola also believe that they are brought each year both by *Nusk!puam* and *Wiswiss*.

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533 In the beginning of time it used to sing.

789 "I shall use a spoon and eat when the Bella Coola River has burst its bounds on account of the teeming salmon in it."

825 The people used to laugh as it repeated this song year after year,

856 until the bird changed its note:

[539] "I shall use a spoon and eat when all is cold and clear. Then there will be Death instead of salmon in Bella Coola."

The next year the streams were so clear that no fish could be caught and the starving people asked the bird to return to its first song. When it did so, the water became murky so that it was possible to catch salmon once more.

The Bella Bella, not the Bella Coola, use the body of a blue jay to cause an infant to grow up with the ability to master difficult tunes in the same way that the bird has a variety of notes. The method of applying this medicine could not be learnt.

789 Most of the above medicines are well known and can be

856 applied by any parent. If, however, a man has employed one of them successfully on a number of occasions, he is often requested to use his ability for others. In such a case, the father of the benefited child is expected to reimburse his friend.

[184] The application or non-application of such medicines is purely the concern of the child's family; they can use as many as they like, or none at all, according to their discretion.

*The following medicines are used during the first year of life:*

304 *To Cause Beauty*

789 Bandages of the softest undyed cedar-bark are prepared for

856 infants of both sexes soon after birth. A woman who is a good

532 artist is requested to draw with charcoal two pictures on one of the pieces of bark—of handsome men if the child is a boy, or of lovely women if a girl. An unmarked wrapping is fastened round the infant's head, then the painted one so arranged that one picture is over the forehead, the other over the occiput, and finally other plain bandages to cover the whole. These

[826] are left in place for about one year. They flatten the forehead

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and back of the head, preventing a bulging appearance which is considered ugly, while the paintings ensure beauty of countenance. Cranial deformation has no supernatural sanction, though it is believed to have been carried out for generations.

*To Cause Leanness*

Place pieces of caribou skin on an infant's wrists and ankles and leave them in position for several months. He will grow up lean and wiry, like the animal.

*To Cause Left-handedness*

Shake the left hand of an infant while lying in the cradle and he will be left-handed throughout life. To do this is considered a malevolent action.

*To Cause the Hair to Grow* (two means)

(1) Rub the infant's scalp with the eye of a *hiakulk* (red cod?), freshly removed from the fish's head.

(2) Boil stems of the swamp gooseberry in water and rub the mixture over the infant's scalp.

Wise mothers always apply one or other of these remedies to their children.

*To Cause Ability in Singing* (two means)

(1) When an infant is a few months old, the parents frequently request a good singer to impart to him ability similar to his own. He takes his beating-stick, spits on it, and rubs it over the child's heart, saying:

"Please be a singer."

This is done only for male children.

(2) Boil together herbs and a bear's bladder and smear the decoction on the infant's back. He must thenceforth wear around his neck for several months a small sack containing four blue grouse gall-bladders (possibly stones from the crop were meant). This gives the child the singing ability of the bird, but the significance of the bear bladder is unknown.

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*To Cause Ability in Understanding the Speech of Ravens* 825

It is well known that when ravens croak, they are really speaking, but their language is unintelligible except to one who has learnt it by means of a medicine. One of these is the following: 856 789

Catch a raven alive and cut a small piece of flesh from its body, beneath the left wing, taking care not to kill the bird. Release it, after having fed the morsel to the child. An infant so treated will grow up able to learn from ravens of the approach of raiding parties, storms, visitors, and all other news which they constantly circulate in their loud calling. It is said that the last person so endowed was the father of a Kimsquit man about forty years of age in 1922. His ability lasted throughout childhood but he lost it through infraction of a taboo.

*The following medicines are used between the ages of one and two:* 304 789

*To Cause Long Life*

One year after birth, holes are pierced through the lobes of the ears and the nasal septum. In the beginning of time, *Älquntäm* told the forefathers of the Bella Coola that if this were not done, the boy or girl would die young. 856 886

*To Cause Ability in Hunting*

When the umbilical cord of a female infant falls, her father places it within the knot-hole of a tree, where it is protected from rain but where it rots and is forgotten. A boy's is preserved with care. The parents wrap it in soft goat's wool and place it in the box where the father keeps his most cherished possessions; this causes the child to be careful, and to grow up with a tendency to treasure his acquisitions rather than to dispose heedlessly of them. As the first anniversary of his son's birth approaches, his father begins to observe ceremonial chastity, endeavouring to estimate the time so that its culmin- 846 856 789 [858] [785]